

WRESTLING FORUM

APRIL 15, 1990

VOLUME VI

ISSUE 5

WRESTLING'S BEST KEPT SECRET

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LET'S PLAY TWO TODAY!

All right!

Let me hear ya!:

a-one, a-two, a-three:

Take -

me out to the wrestling matches,

take me out to the fun!

Buy me some tee-shirts and rub-ber snakes

The boys are just there for appearance sake!

Oh it's push, push, push those souvenirs

If they don't sell it's a shame

For it's five , ten, twenty bucks or more

At the old-con-game!

Whoops! Got my sports mixed up. Can you tell I attended a WWF card recently? Thought so.

Well, anyway, welcome back to another highly entertaining edition of *Wrestling Forum*, Wrestling's Best Kept Secret. We publish on the 15th and 30th of each month and *try real hard* to mail the next day. Rates are \$1.50 per issue and you may subscribe for up to six months at one time. Many of you may be looking at this for the first time and we welcome you and invite you to subscribe. All renewals, letters, results, and basically anything else should be sent to us at **WRESTLING FORUM** , Box 65, Knoxville, IL 61448.

As you can see from the graph in the Miscellaneous Stuff section, we've added some subscribers, but we have a long way to go for us to fill the circle and reach out goal. The incentive program is still on: if you get a friend to subscribe, you'll receive one issue for every four they order. Just be sure when subscribing that they mention you name so you receive credit.

The yearbook is at the printer's now, but he tells me there is a backlog of stuff to do. We are hoping that we can mail it out with the April 30th edition. If you have not ordered yet, the *only* way to get one now is to call me immediately and reserve one. This year I have ordered just enough to go around, but with the backlog at the printer's, we still have a few days to change that order. Price on yearbooks is \$12.50 (plus \$1.50 for 1st class postage - otherwise they'll be sent 3rd or 4th class).

That's it from the front end of the bulletin. Now let's take a look at the latest Wrestling Barometer...

THE **WRESTLING BAROMETER**

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Welcome back to the all new and exciting Wrestling Barometer, the unique census of what's hot and what's not in professional wrestling, presented exclusively each month in *Wrestling Forum*.

Response this time was respectable. Seems like we're on the grow each time. Everyone who reads this is eligible to vote. All you have to do is to send along a note with what you think is hot and what is not and we'll compile it into this column each month.

We'll take an in depth look at the results in a moment, but first, let's review how Barometer entries are tallied. Five points are given for a first place vote, three for a second place vote, one for a third place vote and half a point for any item that is included on a voters list from fourth place on. Finally, a minimum point total is arbitrarily decided upon for inclusion in the column so we can focus on the month's major trends. Now, on to the January Barometer:

WHAT'S HOT

(NEEDED TO QUALIFY: 15 POINTS)

1. **SAVAGE & ELIZABETH ANGLE (43 POINTS)**
2. **STEINER'S WIN IWGP TITLES (36 POINTS)**
3. **WRESTLEMANIA VII(23 1/2 POINTS)**
4. **WCW IN JAPAN (22 1/2POINTS)**
5. **PERCY PRINGLE AS PAUL BEARER (15 POINTS)**

WHAT'S NOT

(NEEDED TO QUALIFY: 15 POINTS)

1. **IRON SHEIK/SLAUGHTER ALLIANCE (38 POINTS)**
2. **HOGAN WINS BACK TITLE (25 POINTS)**
3. **CONTINUED FEUD WITH IRAQ VS USA (21 1/2 POINTS)**
4. **WRESLEMANIA VII (15 1/2 POINTS)**
5. **OLIVER HUMPERDINK IN WCW (15 POINTS)**

NOTES: Vince seemed to lock up the dark side this month with only one WCW slipping into the final tally. Perhaps Ollie would be better suited in the WWF. Normally I would not have separated the numbers one and three entries, except that so many people listed both on their ballots. Wrestlemania becomes one of the rare entries that can be found on both sides.

Deadline for April ballots will be May 13. Send entries and votes to:

**Wrestling Barometer
Box 65
Knoxville, IL 61448**

I•N•D•E•P•E•N•D•E•N•T•L•Y S•P•E•A•K•I•N•G

Sean Hendrick sent along a clipping from a Rochester newspaper that lists a unique PPV choice this month: women's wrestling...in 3-D. Order it and they send you the special glasses you have to wear. I'm not making this up. Somehow, I just don't think wrestling is quite ready for this technological step, yet.

In other independent news, Dick Carikoff is promoting shows under the National Wrestling League banner in Virginia and West Virginia. This is the same group that has done some very successful tours overseas. The foreign shows are their bread and butter with the house shows in Virginia keeping everybody in practice. This past weekend, they ran shows in Front Royal, VA, Kaiser WV, and Hedgesville WV. Rick Rude headlined the cards against Lou Perez (Al Perez was scheduled and no word on why he didn't show). The rest of the undercard was filled out by Tom Brandi vs Sonny Blaze, John Rambo (who has worked for Don Owen) vs Iranian Butcher, Neil Superior (son of the promoter) vs Axl Rotton (now with purple hair), referee Dave "the Wave" McAllister, and midgets. The NWL is scheduled for another tour of some Pacific islands and overseas in June.

Verne Gagne claims to have some shows booked over the next month. They haven't run a house show since last August, and officially retired the title in December. Now, the claim they will have a feature match of Greg Gagne and Wahoo McDaniel against Mike Enos and Wayne Bloom. It may be the only match on the card because I don't think Verne will see a line forming outside his office of prospective wrestlers.

Windy City has several dates booked over the next few weeks including a benefit show for the homeless on May 18 in Chicago's International Amphitheatre. Talk has been that Rick Rude will appear on the card and that rumor is strengthened by the fact that they aren't using his name in ads. They are billing it as a surprise wrestler who used to be in the WWF.

Latest claims from Joe Pedicino: 1) Doug Sommers and Scotty (the Body) Levy are in for his Georgia All Star group. 2) a manager who claims to be the great-great-grandson of Abraham Lincoln (whoops...can't pull that one on someone from Illinois...the last descendant in the Lincoln family died in 1985 and he had no children). 3) he's opening a wrestling school. Believe what you want out of the list.

PENCIL POINT

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BLACKS IN WRESLING

Being Black, I'm often asked why there are no more blacks in wrestling than what there are. I think that a couple issues back, when you and the Phantom combined for a brilliant analysis of the Iraq angle, you hit the nail right on the head.

For years, blacks have been portrayed in a very offensive stereotype. Our heads are harder for some inexplicable reason. We talk funny. We dance good.

Society hasn't held these views on us since the mid sixties. Yet wrestling promoters seem to hold fast to these roles. Many Americans watching wrestling won't understand why blacks are portrayed the way we are.

I wonder how long it is before Vince or Turner or some other bigot comes up with a black wrestler named "the Watermelon Man" or with a wrestler who agrees to wrestle for food stamps.

There are a variety of reasons why you don't see a lot of black wrestlers. Those talented enough for wrestling are usually talented enough to make in other sports; the money is better in other careers; they know they won't get pushed.

The main reason though, is because most of us have too much pride to allow ourselves to be taken advantage of by promoters who think their fans have oatmeal for brains. The only way I would ever consider going into wrestling is if the promoter agreed to push me as a human being instead of some bigot's idea of a black man.

•Name Withheld By Request•

•Norfolk, VA•

WRESTLEMANIA

I attended Wrestlemania live and then saw it on tape about a week later. It was like two different shows.

I don't think words can accurately describe the feeling you get of attending a big show like this in person. I had tears in my eyes during the Elizabeth angle, mainly because everyone around me was bawling. At the beginning of each match, especially the ones at the start of the show, anticipation ran high which added to the aura.

On tape, we got to see stuff through the camera that wasn't possible live or on big screen. Subtle facial expressions and such. Also, on tape, it didn't seem like they took very long in between matches. Live, it took forever sometimes (which was okay because in most cases, it added to the anticipation factor).

One disadvantage of attending live was the lack of

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commentary. I thought I really missed that until I watched the tape and heard Baboon Monsoon. Silence is golden, especially in the city of Angels.

All in all, I enjoyed both versions. My suggestion to other readers is that if you attend live, be sure to watch a tape later. You pick up a lot both ways.

•BOB MURPHY JR.
• WEST HOLLYWOOD, CA.

WCW PRIORITIES

I wonder if I'm the only one who finds it ridiculous that the NWA/WCW would even consider renegotiating with Sid Vicious. Isn't this the same group who let Rick Steamboat slip away for a lot less than \$100,000 just to make an example? Isn't this the same group who lost Terry Funk because of money? Isn't this the same group who could not longer afford the Road Warriors, Jim Cornette, Stan Lane and a host of others?

I hope someday Jim Herd steps back and takes a long look at some of his policies and realizes just how asinine they are.

•KEN SNIDER.
•WAUKEGAN, IL.

SPORTS ILLUSTRATED ARTICLE

Do you think that perhaps part of the reason Sid Vicious wants to leave WCW is because he actually believed that garbage in *Sports Illustrated*? Vince claims that the WWF is worth \$500 million dollars. If that's the case, then wrestlers ought to be earning about a million each and still have some left over for Vince and the office staff. If you ask me, Vicious is just about dumb enough to believe what he reads.

The six page article more resembled a press release than a story. I'm surprised the FCC didn't make them print the word "advertisement" at the top of each page.

I try to remain neutral in my enjoyment of the sport. The WWF has many good points to go with the bad points. So does WCW. So does Memphis and every other small group.

But when a story in a mainline publication such as SI comes across this way, it's a slap in the face to those who toil in the independents, hoping to catch a break somewhere. They get ignored while Vince sits in front of a portrait of himself in the silliest looking clothes I've seen since I last attended Barnum and Bailey's.

Come to think of it, I guess there isn't much difference.

• I M .
•NEW YORK CITY.

World Championship Wrestling

With the way we are supplied information from World Championship Wrestling, I'm suspicious of just about everything they tell me. Last issue we reported that there were two sides to the Flair-Fujinami title situation, one saying it was a work and the other saying it was a shoot. I leaned towards the worked version because very few things in wrestling are for real. After seeing the Japan Supershow, I can tell you for sure that the title switch/screw job is in fact a work.

Let's take a look at the mini-PPV and the results:

MASA SAITO & MASA CHONO

VS

ARN ANDERSON & BARRY WINDHAM

The PPV started before this, but this is where I came in. This was a good match with Anderson and Windham working a little different style (as did all the Americans). Saito did his version of Hulk Hogan hulking out and went berserk on Anderson. The end came with all four in the ring and the ref putting Chono out. Saito had Arn set for a German suplex, but Windham (who was stumbling around looking lost until Saito and Arn were ready) gave Saito a clothesline when Arn ducked and Arn pinned him. Little awkward at the end, but all in all, good. **GRADE: B-**

CURTIS HUGHES VS EL GIGANTE

This was nothing more than to showcase El Gigante to the Japanese and to show he's bigger than Andre. It sounded like the Japanese are now believers. Gigante has improved a lot since he started, but he panders to the crowd too much. He had one spot where he was preparing to suplex Hughes and he took forever to do it because the crowd was oohing and ahing in anticipation. Gigante won the match of course. **GRADE: D**

STEINERS VS HIROSHI HASE & KENSUKE SASAKI

(there goes the spell checker!)

Definitely a match of the year candidate. Both teams got to show off their hot moves and the crowd seemed to be into it. Lots of suplexes and power moves that were appropriately sold by the recipient. Sasaki put Rick in the Northern Lights Suplex which Rick was able to kick out of at a two count. That, I thought, sealed the fact that the Japanese team would win. Usually if someone kicks out of the other guy's special move, they compensate by letting the guy with the special move win. Not so in this case. Scott topped off this gem by pinning Sasaki after the Frankensteiner which was about the only thing that didn't impress the crowd. That was sort of embarrassing after Jim Ross and Tony Shivone had been talking about how much the Japanese were looking forward to seeing it. The win gives the Steiners the WCW world titles, the WCW US titles, and the IWGP titles (Japan's version of the world championship). No other team has ever held the two world titles at the same time. **GRADE: A+**

STING VS MUTA

Don't get me wrong; these two did a very good job. The only problem was, other than the finish, it was about the same match we saw all of last year. Sting has lost some of his mobility with the knee injury so it was done a bit slower. The end came when Sting went for his Stinger splash and Muta blew the mist in his eyes. Muta pinned Sting moments later. After the match, Sting attacked Muta and the wrestlers who had come to ringside to act as seconds had a pull apart brawl. The crowd didn't know what to think of Muta cheating to win and they didn't approve of Sting attacking Muta after the bell. **GRADE: B**

RIC FLAIR VS TATSUMI FUJINAMI

We described the finish last issue without seeing it for ourselves and we were pretty accurate. The match itself was different from what we're used to seeing from Flair and that's neither good nor bad. Just different. Flair's chops (and would someone please tell Jim Ross that there is no such thing as a "Judo chop") were wicked and Fujinami's chest was turning black and blue by the end of the match. Ross and Shivone set up the audience by stressing the rules throughout the match. According to them, it is legal to throw your opponent over the top ropes in Japan, but this particular match was being worked under American rules. As mentioned last issue, they did not let anyone in Japan know until two days later that Flair was still being recognized by World Championship Wrestling as the world champ. Anyway, the match was worked awfully stiff with neither man being anxious to sell. Flair hit a gusher outside the ring (Tommy Rich would have been proud), and bled through the rest of the match. The end came with a nice looking ref bump. Bill Alphonso had been outside the ring trying to get both wrestlers back in the ring. He was climbing back in as the two ran the ropes and Flair collided with him. The toss over the top ropes was questionable. Flair charged Fujinami and Fujinami just sort of flipped him over in "self defense." Flair got back in the ring and was pinned twice with no ref (the crowd counted – in English no less) before Tiger Hatori jumped in the ring and tolled a three count. Alphonso made no effort to correct the situation at ringside. Had he, there would probably been one of those famous Japanese riots we've heard about. **GRADE: B+**

Other notes on the card: several of the matches had parts edited for length or to make the American wrestlers look better. Ric Flair looked like he was suffering from a terminal case of jet lag during the introductions...Attendance was around 65,000 and the live gate of somewhere around 3 million is US equivalency.

WCW may announce a high buyrate on this show, but whatever the figure is, it will be terribly misleading. First of all, it was not widely available. Many cable systems here in Illinois did not offer it. That makes the "universe" smaller which gives more impact for each subscription sold. The second misleading factor is the fact that it is being offered on the lines of a PPV movie instead of a wrestling event. That means they are offering it

several times during the month, not just live and a replay directly following. Because of this, they may try to under exaggerate the buyrate since those who ordered it the first time, probably won't want it ten more times. If we could get the actual number of orders taken for the show, that would give us a better picture of how profitable the PPV was.

In other news, Sid Vicious walked out of the promotion after agreeing to a reported \$100,000 raise in pay. Vicious had given notice that he would sit out the remainder of his contract and wait for an offer from Titan. The contract expires in September. Vicious had agreed to the raise and then changed his mind over the weekend. He was scheduled against El Gigante in a series of matches, and according to sources, he will work through the next PPV. Don't count on it. I expect to see a major league burial of Vicious with lots of video tapes of Luger pinning him inside ten seconds from one of last year's Clashes. I also wouldn't be surprised to see him no show the match with El Gigante and have WCW claim that he had been in the building, but ran out in fear of the giant.

It doesn't appear that the next Pay Per View on May 19 will be set up with a Clash of Champions Special. Instead, they will be using the six weeks prior to the PPV to set it up on the syndicated shows and on WTBS. Also, the mini PPV (an experiment to see if that type of show might replace the Clash shows) was used to help hype the show.

The PPV line up is a strong one that definitely has my interest. Here is the tentative line up we were given: Dan Spivey & Larry Zbyszko vs Ricky Morton & Big Josh; Nikita vs Tommy Rich; Freebirds vs Young Pistols (probably in the finals for the US belts); Terry Taylor vs Dustin Rhodes; Arn Anderson vs Bobby Eaton for the TV title; Sid Vicious vs El Gigante in a stretcher match (they may need a flatbed truck for the stretcher); Barry Windham vs Brian Pillman in a taped fist match; Butch Reed (who is sticking around at least for a while) vs Ron Simmons in a cage; for the World Tag Championship, the Steiners vs Lex Luger & Sting; return match for the world title Ric Flair vs Tatsumi Fujinami.

In the coming weeks, they will be setting the angles for the Steiners-Luger/Sting match. Supposedly, both teams will be babyface teams, though we may see some subtle heel moves by one or both. The line up is strong and is the first in recent memory that appeals to the hard core inside fans as well as the casual fans. This is also the first time I can remember them starting to hype something this early. It all adds up to what could be the best show of the year, or, depending on Dusty's finishes, the most disappointing.

The date given to me for the next Clash of Champions is June 12, but of course there is no line up. My photographic memory messed up the negative on this one and I can't tell you where it's coming from either.

SHORT BOOKS AND VIDEO TAPES

Back when we first started *Wrestling Forum* we ran a feature with this title. Recently, a former staff member reminded me of it and we thought we'd try it again. The subject matter should be pretty well self explanatory.

SHORT BOOKS

- Wrestling Holds I Know by Hulk Hogan
- Restaurants I Have Never Eaten At by Buddy Rose
- Successful Promoting in the Nineties by Jim Herd
- How to Make Money in your Spare Time by Blackjack Mulligan & Kendall Windham
- How to be a Successful Booker by Ole Anderson
- Clean Living in a Drug Free America by Kevin Von Erich
- Public Speaking by
- Off the Ropes by Nightstalker
- Pleasing Your Spouse by Eddie Gilbert; forward by Jake Roberts
- the Art of Whispering by Roddy Piper
- Creative Announcing without Cliches by Gorilla Monsoon; forward by Gordon Solie
- Unbiased Reporting by Vince McMahon
- Truth in Journalism by Bill Apter and the staff of PWI
- How to Cut Down on your No Shows by Verne Gagne
- Bodybuilding by Greg Gagne
- Three Syllable Words I Know by Jim Duggan
- Unionize: Your Key to Happy Negotiations by Sgt. Slaughter
- My Fans in the US Love Me by Jose Gonzales
- Ring Rats: My Favorite People by Pat Patterson
- A New You with Make Up Secrets by Sherri Martel; forward by Animal and Hawk

SHORT TAPES

- Abdullah the Butcher: His Bloodless Matches
- The Ultimate Warrior: Classic 60-Minute Draws
- Four-Star Midget Matches
- The Best of Earthquake John Tenta
- the Ric Flair Collection: matches in which he does *not* flip into the turnbuckles.
- The Midnight Express Cures Insomnia: boring matches by Lane/Eaton/Condrey
- Kevin Sullivan: Interesting Interviews

THICK BOOKS

- The Art of Backstabbing Made Easy by Dusty Rhodes
- Money Making Ideas by Vince McMahon
- Jokes for All Occasions by Jim Cornette
- People, Living and Dead, Who Move Faster Than Me by Andre the Giant

WRESTLERS ARE PEOPLE TOO

This issue's column comes from another fan who wishes to remain nameless. The WWF wrestlers observed here were on a flight for a recent Pay Per View.

We should point out that this is just one fan's experience with wrestlers and your experience may be entirely different, depending on a multitude of variables. If you have a contribution to this column, send it along. If you wish your name to be withheld, just tell us so.

"ON AN AIRPLANE WITH THE WWF"

JIMMY HART - Like a seasoned pro a flying. He was very cordial to those who did approach him during this two and a half hour flight, though not many did.

GREG VALENTINE - He wanted to sleep and do little else. At the airport he did pose for a picture with a fan, but he never even bothered to look at the camera. He was off in space somewhere.

TED DIBIASE - thought it was funny when someone asked him why he hadn't chartered his own plane. He said he thought about just buying the airline till he saw the financial shape they were in.

DAVEY BOY SMITH - Looked very nervous during takeoff and landing. He read something through most of the flight.

JAKE ROBERTS - He took advantage of the food and bar on the flight. He also joked with some of the other wrestlers when the flight attendant asked about Damien. He said he would be glad to show her his snake.

BOBBY HEENAN - Quick witted all the time. He joked with the attendants and other passengers who had no idea who he was.

TITO SANTANA - He argued with one of the agents (not sure which one) about who got the window seat. I'm sure it was a work.

KERRY VON ERICH - Had a problem at the airport getting through the metal detector. He must have emptied his pockets a dozen times before he passed. He smiled though it all, but it put him in a real bad mood for the flight. This boy's got a potty mouth.

PHANTOM OF THE RING

by Ed Garea

MAIL BAG – I'd like to reply to the letters in the March 30 edition. First, in answer to the question of the "taste", I'm firmly of the belief that taste is a subjective matter; in other words, it is in one's mouth. One person's meat may be another's poison.

Ultimately, however, the final arbiter of taste is the marketplace. If a movie repulses the critics but pleases the audience, it's a hit. The film graveyard is filled with movies the critics raved about but which only drew flies.

Professional wrestling has always counted on bad taste; this has been its staple since the late thirties. Sometimes the bad taste clicks with the paying public and sometimes it does not. In the case of *Wrestlemania VII*, it seems that it has not clicked.

I am no arbiter of taste; I only know what I like, and what I don't like, I'll let everyone know loud and clear. Anyone who has read this column over the last five years surely knows what I do not like and I have made no bones about it.

As to Mr. Stanley, I was not attacking you per se. Yes, I have read your articles in *Wrestling Perspective* and would agree with your consistency. I was attacking certain opinion makers among the smart set and certain newsletter writers. That's who I meant by "those people." Appalled as I was with Vince's angle, I was equally appalled with the selective criticism and the selective criticism of Vince to boot. They acted as if they were surprised that Vince would do such an angle. I mean, where have they been? To me, the Sapphire, Bad News Brown and Virgil angles were equally, if not more, appalling. The history of professional wrestling is that of a racist business. It was just the intensity and amount of their criticism of Vince on this one issue that made me see red, for on no other matter were they as vociferous.

By "politically correct" I meant not the actual politics, but the wrestling politics. Has anyone noticed out there a falling into line of "smart" fans? Sort of like lemmings. Ric Flair is the greatest, Hulk Hogan is the worst, and anything Japanese is seemingly wonderful.

Even so, one newsletter writer seemed to relent on hogan, finding his visits to the families of those troops overseas to be "sincere." Really. The whole Hogan thing was one of the most cynical ploys I have ever seen concocted in wrestling. In another vein, one writer mentioned how he could no longer respect Ric Flair since he appeared at a fund-raiser for Jesse Helms. Who cares? Flair's appearance didn't even make the national press for one thing and for another, what Mr. Flair sees fit to do with his own time is none of my business, unless he chooses to annoy me by forcing it down my throat during a wrestling show.

No, there is a sense of being "politically correct" in wrestling, though

why anyone would want to be is beyond my comprehension.

And what was the whole upshot of the "Wrestlemania crisis" anyway? Vince took a few hits from even a few magazines that don't ordinarily cover his kind of nonsense. But in the end, the market killed him. Holding a major event in Los Angeles was a longshot at best, as the territory will not support wrestling on a large scale. I think the main reason the buyrate was so low was the quality of the show being offered for the price. At \$19.95, it would have done better, but people are wary of spending \$29.95 for a show that's headline event was dubious at best. Everyone (yes, even those dreaded marks!) seemed to realize Sgt. Slaughter was a washed-up grappler who would drop the strap to Hogan. There was no suspense. My cat could guess the outcome of that match. The supporting card was not that great, either: They gave away the ending of the Warrior-Savage match, and I don't know anyone who was dying to see the Nasty Boys-Hart Foundation encounter. In the end, it was economics way more than politics that decided Vince's fate.

Oh well, enough of reality, on to wrestling. So, Big Stiff Vicious is going to accept WDW's renegotiated figure? Guess it beats handing in the wind waiting for Vince to say yes, no or go kiss my butt. Besides, Stiff doesn't like to lay down, and that's just what he'd be doing against Hogan and the Warrior. Sid is supposed to have his summer showdown against El Gigante (that's Spanish for "Big Stiff"). Oh, Boy! I can hardly wait. What a series that should be.

Loved the article in *Sports Illustrated* on Vince. Especially that pose of him sitting under his favorite picture. Really, if he didn't want it shown in the magazine, he never should have posed for it. You mean to tell me that the so called media and publicity genius was so naive as not to know the consequences?

Speaking of phony items, I have to agree with Jon on the canned noise we've been hearing on WTBS as of late. I mean, if they're going to give us canned audience noise, at least get it right. I hear the crowd cheering during the rest holds and strangely silent during the high spots. Who's programming this? The Three Stooges?

What the world needs now, another Dusty Rhodes retirement tour. If this one goes over big, perhaps it can become an annual event. If there is still a WCW by the end of the year, that it. And I still go by my yearbook prediction that Nermal, son of Dusty, will win the NWA strap sometime in the future - 1992 to be exact - as long as Dad's still the booker.

I don't know, it must be me, but I find Paul Bearer's schtick almost unbearable to watch. If I want to see funny faces, I'll watch a Marx Brothers picture.

BIO

ARN ANDERSON

REAL NAME: MARTY LUNDE

YEAR DEBUTED: 1981

AGE: 33

CURRENT STATUS: TV CHAMPION-WCW

Arn's inauspicious beginning was that a of TV jobber under his real name in the old Mid South area. He wasn't anything special in the ring and because of that, never received any major attention. His photo appeared in several national wrestling publications and he was a weekly staple on Bill Watts' TV shows.

He joined the NWA a couple of years later and was put in the role of Arn Anderson, with Ole (then booker) claiming him as a nephew (no actual relation exists). He was teamed with Matt Borne and were set to be given a major push as tag champions under the guidance of manager Paul Ellering. Borne was arrested on an alleged sex charge just after the formation of the team and fired, leaving Anderson on his own. A new team called the Road Warriors took over in the spot Anderson and Borne were to have had.

Working as a heel, he continued to be pushed as Ole's nephew with an attitude problem. He worked hard and progressed and was eventually invited to join the Four Horsemen.

He began teaming regularly with Tully Blanchard and they eventually took the NWA tag team titles. In late 1988, with no notice, Tully and Arn left the NWA, dropping the straps to the Midnight Express on their final night.

They surfaced in the WWF and were known as the Brain Busters under the wing of Bobby Hennan. They worked there for a year, gaining the tag titles in the process, before quitting. Arn's final match for the WWF was the 1989 Survivor's Series.

He returned to the NWA where he came in as a babyface, helping Ric Flair in his battle with Terry Funk. He won the TV title from the Great Muta in January 1990. In February, he, along with the rest of the Four Horsemen, turned heel. He formed a tag team with Ric Flair on several occasions over the past year despite his TV title. He lost the title to Tom Zenk late in the year but regained it once again a few weeks later.

Currently, Anderson holds the TV title and is making tag appearances with Barry Windham.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT
by Sean B Hendrick

WRESTLEMANIA VII AWARDS

"SEE WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU DON'T PAY YOUR TAXES" AWARD – Willie Nelson, if they would have propped him with any more WWF merchandise, he would have fallen over.

"THIS MUST BE THE WWF AND THAT'S WHY I DON'T HAVE A FIRST NAME" AWARD – Genichrio Tenyru and Kojo Kataeo who, like the Orient Express, lost their first names upon entering the WWF tag team ranks.

"BEST IMITATION OF COMMANDER USA AND HIS PAL LEFTY" AWARD – The Ultimate Warrior for when he "lost it" and started talking to his hand.

FASTEST ACCUMULATION OF FREQUENT FLYER MILES AT ONE WRESTLEMANIA – Randy Savage for his use of the top rope in repeated fashion for the elbow drops on Warrior.

"WHY WAIT FOR THE REAL NUMBERS" AWARD – Gorilla Monsoon, for the repeated claim of largest pay per view audience ever during the broadcast.

"HOW COME ALL THE LOCKER ROOMS LOOK THE SAME AT THE MAJOR EVENTS IN DIFFERENT CITIES" AWARD – The WWF prop department, they have used the same backdrop for several PPV's and SNME's to simulate a locker room interview area.

BEST IMITATION OF A WALKING SHAG RUG – Ultimate Warrior for his new ring robes.

"EVEN THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE DOESN'T USE THE PHRASE THAT OFTEN" AWARD – Gorilla Monsoon, for his use of the phrase "City of Angels."

"CALL GENERAL SCHWARTSCOPF AND LET HIM KNOW THAT THE WAR IS NOW OFFICIALLY OVER" AWARD – Gorilla, again, for that gem of information after the main even while Hogan was posing.

"WE MUST HAVE A CANADIAN RING ANNOUNCER" AWARD – Alex Trebeck for his accent on the letters when pronouncing Hulk Hogan's name.

BEST FIELDER'S CHOICE AWARD – to Ultimate Warrior for his catch of Savage off the top rope

"I USED TO BE A RESPECTED WRESTLER" AWARD – Jim Duggan, who looked and sounded like a bigger clown than normal during the opening match.

"I JUST TAGGED ALONG WITH MY GIRL FIREND SINCE SHE'S RINGING THE BELL" AWARD – Donald "Hey, this ain't Atlantic City" Trump.



MEMPHIS




with help from **Bill Burnett**

First, a correction from last issue. We made reference to a former manager in the area, Dr. Ken Ramey, spinning in his grave, when the promotion favorably compared the Texas hangmen to the legendary Interns. Well, spinning in his grave would be rather hard for the good doctor...he's still living. I got my managers mixed up. I was thinking of Sam Bass who was killed in a car accident several years ago. My goof, and I apologize.

Meanwhile, back on the ranch, Jerry Lawler is in fact, taking some time off. The 4/6 show had a video of Jerry with his doctor who was showing some x-rays. The Doctor insisted that Jerry take six weeks off, but Jerry managed to talk him into just a month. Jerry said he would work the following Monday night card in Memphis before taking his vacation.

What this means is we can expect to see the heels take over the promotion. I doubt if Mr. Lawler's ego will allow him to leave anybody in charge that might threaten his popularity. When the month is up, then Jerry will return like a western gunslinger to restore law and order to Sleepy Gulch.

For his farewell performance, Lawler requested that Eddie Marlin sign a match between him and Eric Embry in a cage with the world title up against the Texas title. Marlin refused to sanction such a match, so Lawler asked for a non-sanctioned title vs title match. Don't try to make sense out of this, folks, this is wrestling. Lawler said that after he won the Texas belt, he was going down to the Mississippi bridge and toss the Texas belt into the river.

The match turned out to be one of the typical Memphis brawls in a cage. Referee Frank Morell took a couple of bumps during the match and Embry finally finished him off by pile driving him. Tom Pritchard came to ringside and managed to get a belt threaded through the cage and looped it around Lawler's throat. Embry pounded away on Lawler from the inside while Pritchard choked him from the outside. Embry got hold a of metal chair and went to work on Lawler with it. Steve Keirn ran to the ring to make the save, but had to climb over the top of the cage (don't ask why he just didn't go after Pritchard on the outside - that would have been too easy). Embry then hightailed it, but before he left, he grabbed both belts from ringside.

The heels from Texas continue to wreck havoc in Lawler's absence. During an Eddie Gilbert interview the following week, Pritchard, Embry and Steve Austin came out and attacked him. Gilbert must have hit an artery with the blade because he was drenched in blood the moment he came up off the floor.

Later in the show, Embry was doing an interview and noticed someone standing behind the camera. He called him out and it turned out to be a fan, in Bill Burnett's words, "a real Gomer." Embry asked him if he was one of Eddie's friends and the guy said he was. Embry asks the guy if he would like

to take a shot at him, but the fan refuses. Embry slaps him and the guys still doesn't respond. Finally, Embry jumps all over him and throws him in the ring. He and Pritchard hoist him up on the ropes for the second story piledriver that they've been using when Gilbert does the 1776 run in save. Gilbert then does one of the best interviews in weeks, ranting and raving about how this poor guy wasn't even a wrestler and how he was going to get even. He got a tremendous response.

The previous week, Gilbert had said on an interview that he wasn't a fan favorite really. He said he hadn't changed his style at all. The only thing that had changed was who he was wrestling.

Bill Dundee and his son continue to have their problems. Dundee told the viewers that if he had the chance on the next card to paddle Jamie, he would. The chance came on the 4/8 card when Dundee, teaming with Bruno against Jamie and Austin. Bruno pinned Jamie and Bill got in the ring, pulled down Jamie's pants (they blacked out part of the screen) and spanked him. There has been some negative reaction in Memphis over this angle as a group of concerned citizens is claiming this angle has negative impact on the family unit. While that may be true, a good parent could use this to teach their children instead of frighten them.

Jeff Jarrett won the Southern championship by defeating Tom Pritchard. Jarrett won the match and was immediately attacked by the Texas heels. As a result, Jeff has brought in a mystery partner to help him. They were going to keep it a secret until the Monday show, but decided they better let the cat out of the bag. Turns out to be Robert Fuller with whom they had a taped phone interview.

The 4/15 Memphis card (and they continue to push the Pitkin Building) is pretty weak: Danny Davis vs Keith Roberson; Nighttrain Jackson (who now wears stripped bib overalls like someone on a train) vs El Grand Pistolero; Bruno vs JC Ice Baby in a hair vs hair match (there *will* be a haircut, they tell us); Dundee and Steve Keirn vs the Texas Hangmen; Jeff Jarrett and Robert Fuller vs Austin and Pritchard; and Eddie Gilbert vs Eric Embry in the main event.

World Wrestling Federation

The WWF came to town (Moline, IL) on Sunday night the 14th and we attended along with a full house of 5000 other fans. Here are the results:

POWER & GLORY VS SHEEPWHACKERS

What a wonderful beginning to a night of wrestling. It was all comedy and I have nothing against comic relief matches when the comedy is good. This was not. Hercules reversed a pile up of Luke and Paul with a blind ref. This finish is hard to mess up, but they found a way to do it. **GRADE: Z**

KERRY VON ERICH VS DEMOLITION SMASH

Most notable part of this match was that Rick Martel was a no show. Most of the bout saw Smash on offense with Kerry gaining just short advantages every once in a while. The end came with Kerry outside the ring and Smash picking him up to slam him. Kerry held on, turned it into a small package and got the pin. **GRADE: C-**

JIM DUGGAN VS IRON SHEIK MUSTAFA

WARNING: WATCHING THIS MATCH HAS BEEN KNOWN TO MAKE LABORATORY RATS BRAIN DEAD. Duggan pinned him clean. **GRADE: Z**

ULTIMATE WARRIOR VS UNDERTAKER

If I hadn't been there myself to see it, I would have thought that the three readers we had there reporting back had been drinking heavily. I still wonder what the hell happened, but I can assure you, the computer has not been possessed. **THIS WAS A GREAT MATCH!!!** Mark sold very little and Warrior was working like crazy, doing bumps, and selling his butt off! For a while, I thought maybe Curt Hennig had donned a dark wig, painted his face, and taken a year's worth of steroids. Callous hit the tombstone piledriver late in the match and Warrior kicked out (a la Flair) at the 2.995 count. The end came with Warrior having a slight advantage and Percy tossing the urn into the ring for Mark to use. Warrior won by DQ. Afterwards, Undertaker destroyed Warrior and they tried to stuff him in the bodybag, but all the babies from the card made the save. **GRADE: A-**. You read it right. I checked with the other three readers we had there and they, without knowing what I had given it, graded it from a B+, A- and A.

One more note of interest from this match: This crowd was a typical WWF crowd, booing all the heels and cheering all the babies. In this match, however, Undertaker got about 25% cheers. One guy near me, obviously not and inside fan, said, "I wish he's gotten him in that bag!" Looks like Vince may have some work to do on this character.

NORD THE BESERKER VS KOKO B WARE

Sorry, I missed this one altogether. Nature called and I answered. Nord won by COR. No grade from me, but the others there said it rated about a C-

EARTHQUAKE VS JAKE ROBERTS

A lot better than expected. They haven't shown the angle on TV yet where Earthquake splashes Damien, so this match was attempting to tell a

story. From that point of view, they did an excellent job. Match wise, it still sucked. EQ kept going under the ring for the snake and Jake kept making the save. EQ worked on Jake's knee through the last half of the match and Jake sold it to the point of falling down when EQ whipped him across the ring. EQ won on DQ after he brought the snake in the ring to splash it. Jake ran in again, made the save and chased EQ back to the dressing room with Damien. **GRADE: D+**

DAVEY ROID SMITH VS CURT HENNIG

And after seeing this, I thought Warrior *had* changed places with Hennig. Curt took 2 or 3 good bumps, but the rest of the match was nothing more than a series of rest holds. Pretty boring considering. Curt pinned Davey Boy with his feet on the corner ropes. Afterwards, DBS gave Curt a running powerslam and left him for dead. **GRADE: C-**

ORIENT EXPRESS VS ROCKERS

Potentially, this was the best match on the card, but it was the last match, and this was a Sunday night which meant they'd done several shows since the weekend began. What we got was a rushed match, but still a pretty decent one. The usual bumps and stuff with the end coming off a hot tag to Janetty. He cleaned house, then they did a double elbow off the top ropes which led to the pin on Tanaka. **GRADE: B**

From Moline, they headed to Omaha for the taping of Saturday Night's Main Event and Superstars and then to Cedar Rapids, Iowa on Tuesday night for a Challenge taping. We should have results on those shows before the end of the issue.

World Championship Wrestling has decided to start playing the numbers game that Titan is so famous for. While Titan is claiming the largest ever PPV audience for their Wrestlemania VII, WCW put out the word that the "official" buyrate was a 2.8%. That was reported to us shortly after last issue went out and I know that some other newsletter editors reported it as gospel. We reported a preliminary figure of 4.7 - 4.9% and that turns out to be just a tad bit high. The word I got this week from the cable industry is that the end result is a 4.2% which is far below the expected 7%.

There are a couple of contributing factors towards the low buyrate. Other than the main event, there wasn't a lot of interest in the show as a whole. Many publications (non wrestling publications) reported the end result weeks prior to the show. Anyone with any sense of wrestling knowledge at all knew Hogan was winning back the strap. That led to diminished interest.

Another factor was the high price of \$29.95. Instead of lots of people ordering the event, many went together and had Wrestlemania parties. I know of several that took place around the country and locally. By splitting the cost, the fans saved money and cost Titan some bucks in lost subscriptions.

The third contributing factor was the video tape. Less than a month after the event, the tape is in the video stores already. Many stores were advertising an arrival date prior to Wrestlemania. With the \$30 price tag on the PPV versus a buck or two rental charge, I'm sure this contributed in a

minor way to the low buyrate.

Last issue we reported the angles that have been airing over the last two weeks on WWF telecasts. Let's take a closer look since we didn't have a lot of details last time.

First up, the angle where Ultimate Warrior was put in a coffin by Undertaker. Nicely done with Savage doing well on the commentary. The lid was nailed shut, and Titan personnel did have a little problem getting Warrior out of the thing. That's the first step in setting up their feud.

The second angle is to be shown this weekend. Jake wrestles Earthquake and instead of putting Damien in his corner, he puts him under the ring. In this match, unlike the one we saw live, Earthquake gets Damien (actually he pulls out a duplicate bag) and splashes it. Jake recovers in time to run in and chase off EQ, but by this time, "Damien" is ready to be made into a belt and matching boots. I'm told that Jake's grieving scene is not the best acting job ever done by a wrestler.

RIP OFF TIME! They are selling the official program from Wrestlemania at house shows at \$5.00 a pop. Of the 40 pages, 22 of them are advertisements for WWF merchandise. That's bad enough, but the rip off is this: It's the same exact program that you can go down to any newsstand and pick up for just \$2.50. Well, there is one difference: the house show programs list the matches for the night on an inserted sheet (on the back of this there's yet another ad). If you consider that piece of paper worth \$2.50, then I guess it isn't a rip off.

"Suburban Commando", Hulk Hogan's latest movie is supposed to be released in the next couple weeks, if it hasn't already. Don't look for it to be around too long, though. I understand they want to rush it into the video stores. A couple of people have assured me that it's much better than "No Holds Barred", but then again, that wouldn't be hard to be. Co stars are Christopher Lloyd of "Taxi" and "Back to the Future" fame, and Shelly DuVal who played Olive Oyle in Popeye.

Mike Rotundo's character here is called Irwin R. Shyster, and although they don't actually say it, they let you assume that he's an IRS auditor by using his initials frequently. He's been auditing the tax returns of babyfaces, questioning what would appear to be standard deductions while ignoring some of the outrageous deductions claimed by WWF heels. I'm told that this character is Vince's way of getting back at the IRS for the audits of Titan Sports over the past couple of years. If you ask me, that's a quick way to make life miserable for yourself in the coming years.

A small problem developed on a combined Japanese-Titan show. Koji Kitao tired of doing jobs for Earthquake, stopped selling mid match and challenged EQ to a shoot. Kitao kicked the referee and then got on the house mike and told the entire crowd that Earthquake was fake and he was tired of having to lose to him. The Japanese promotion fired Kitao for his outburst. You will remember Kitao as the horrible Japanese wrestler from Wrestlemania.

News from the latest set of TV tapings done in Omaha and Cedar Rapids...

On the taping for Saturday Night's Main Event, two main things happened. In a match between Sgt. Slaughter and Ultimate Warrior, Paul Bearer comes to ringside with a coffin. Instead of stuffing Warrior in the coffin, Undertaker comes out of it. More heat on their feud.

Also, a battle royal is held. The eventual winner of that is Curt Hennig.

From the Challenge taping in Cedar Rapids...

Brutus Beefcake is back doing an interview segment called Brutus' Barbershop. It will be airing mainly on the Challenge TV show. Guests on this segment were Jake Roberts, who introduced his new snake and said something about wanting to "eat" Earthquake, Roddy Piper, who talked about Michael Landon's bout with cancer and Hulk Hogan.

Mike Enos and Wayne Bloom, better known as the Destruction Crew had tryouts on the shows in the opening matches. They were called just "Destruction" and lost to Koko B Ware and Buck Zumhoff. No word on whether they passed the tryouts or not.

Jake Roberts has a new snake that he's toting around. We had thought at first that perhaps the snake gimmick was dead (pardon the pun) but not so. The new snake is called Lucifer.

Smash did a couple of jobs on the show, one for Jake and the other for Duggan. No sign of Crush so it looks like Demolition is history.

Roddy had a good match with Ted DiBiase. He did some nice schtick with Sherri as well. He kissed her on lips, threw her out of the ring and then spit on her. That should draw some noise from the feminist movement.

All of the dark matches on this show were decided by count out or DQ. Not a one of them had a clean pin fall. Did Dusty leave behind some of his ideas when he left?

Marty Janetty potatoed a jobber with one of his dropkicks late in the show. The kick caught the kid flush on the jaw and people twelve rows deep heard the sickening crack. Those closer to ringside reported the guy's eyes went glassy for a few minutes afterwards.

My thanks to Joel Kolsrud and Jo Cambell for the reports on the Cedar Rapids show.

Air date for Saturday Night's Main Event is tentatively scheduled for April 27 on NBC.

RESULTS FROM ALL OVER

4/11 RUSKIN, FL (SWA) - courtesy of **SHANNON ROSE**...Sgt. Ray the Bull pinned Sonny T...Nuclear Assassin and Joe Bruce were both counted out...Tom Sawyer over Keno McKinsey...Mohammed Studd pinned James DuPree...Dynamite Express/Ray the Bull went to a no contest with Bad Boys/Tommy Starr...Jerry Flynn beat Nuclear Assassin #2...**NOTES:** ATTENDANCE: 60 ...The Bad Boys turned on manager Mr. Fritzzy after their match, but continue as a heel team in a three way feud with the Hell Rebels and the Dynamite Express.

4/12 TAMPA (UWF) - courtesy of **SHANNON ROSE** ...Rock & Roll Warrior drew Brian Jernigan...Tom Arndt beat Sonny Trout...Beff Wellington pinned AL Hardeman...Charlie the King Braden ousted TJ Styles ...Big Jim Magnum won by countout over Jim Brady... Big V pinned Jim the Animal Cooper...Jerry Flynn beat Jumbo Baretta by DQ...Man Mountain Brody won a 15 man battle royal...**NOTES:** Attendance: 225 ...show was promoted by Brois Malenko...Brody threw out Baretta to win Battle royal.

4/13 MINNEAPOLIS (WWF) - courtesy of **KANDI & ROB KETCHMARK**...Bret Hart pinned Barbarian (B) ...IRS beat Jimmy Snuka (D-) ...Kerry Von Erich over Smash (D+)...DiBiase beat Virgil (C)...Road Warriors by COR Nasty Boys (B+)... Warlord defeated Tugboat (Z)...Ricky Steamboat over Haku (D+)...Hogan pinned Sgt. Slaughter (D)... **NOTES:** Attendance: 8500...Roadies did some good stuff with Jimmy Hart, threatening to give him the top rope clothesline... Sherri used JJ Dillon's shoe to KO Virgil...Hogan has a new finisher!!! he threw fire at Sarge to get the pin!

MISCELLANEOUS STUFF

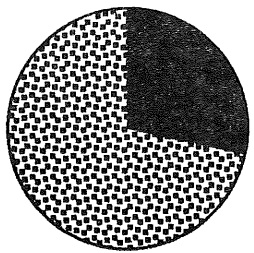
I'm going to break a long standing policy here, of not plugging stuff for non subscribers because I think this could be a lot of fun for a lot of people. There will be a mini convention of wrestling fans in Chicago from July 19-21. Sam DeCero's Windy City group will provide the wrestling and they are going to have a softball game, ring event (where you can actually wrestle), and auction of memorabilia. For more info, write to Diane Devine, 4150 E. Iowa Ave #406, Denver, CO 80222. Help her out by sending a SASE. We won't be making the trip, but after putting together two conventions myself, I know this is a great way to get to meet other wrestling fans, wrestlers, etc and establish friendships that will last a lifetime (or in some cases, until you screw up).

We were supposed to have the latest round of the *Wrestling Forum* tournament in this issue, but we tried to contact Sean several times and failed each time. We should have the latest results and match ups next issue.

Got a clip in the mail about Kansas City mayoral candidate Bob Lewellen who did a "Ric Flair style interview." He said, "I may not be able to talk the talk, but I can assure you I can walk the walk and move this city forward." And there is no truth to the rumor that he tried to hire Jesse Ventura's campaign manager.

That's about it for another issue. We'll see you in a couple of weeks. Those of you who ordered yearbooks should receive them with the next mailing if everything goes according to plan. Thanks for reading and keep those new subscribers coming!

goal



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